

Determination of Actions Required Under Component 1 of the 2008 OCAP Biological Opinion  
March 15, 2010

---

For the week of March 15, 2010, the Service has determined that OMR flows be no more negative than -5,000 cfs on a 14-day average (no more negative than -6,250 cfs on a 5-day average), as allowed under the RPA.

The Service received a recommendation from the Smelt Working Group (SWG) to modify operations to achieve OMR flows of no more negative than -3,000 cfs. SWG cautioned that adult take limits may be exceeded in the coming days or weeks if current trends in salvage continue. Historical data show that adult delta smelt salvage often tapers off significantly by mid-March, but this pattern is highly variable, and salvage can continue into early April. Salvage rates this year do not appear to follow any previously observed pattern, thus it is difficult to determine whether it is about to taper off or will continue for several more weeks.

Results from the SKT #3 indicate that spawning is underway (spent females) and that the highest densities of the detectable populations are centered in the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel and Cache Slough.

Recognizing uncertainty about the anticipated duration of adult salvage, the apparently favorable distribution of delta smelt, and the desire to maintain flexibility for water supplies, the Service does not recommend operational changes at this time. Because there is evidence that spawning has begun, the Service believes that the current trend of adult salvage is likely to taper off soon. We will continue to monitor salvage rates in the coming days. If warranted, the Service will ask the SWG to reconvene.

Delta temperatures have exceeded 12<sup>0</sup>C since February 14 and egg size in salvage- and survey-collected females is approximately 1 mm in diameter. Spent females were collected in SKT #3. Therefore, the juvenile protective phase of the biological opinion (RPA Component 2; Action 3 in Attachment B) is in effect. This action will continue until June 30 or when the 3-day mean water temperature at Clifton Court Forebay reaches 25<sup>0</sup>C, whichever occurs earlier.